

# Press Release



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## Governor to Act on Senator Coleman's Request Establishing Statewide Panel

### *Governor's Executive Order Initiates Juneteenth Emancipation Day Commission*

ST. LOUIS – Senator Maida Coleman, D-St. Louis, today announced that Governor Bob Holden has readily agreed with her request to establish by executive order a statewide Juneteenth Emancipation Day Commission.

"I'm very pleased the governor continues to take great interest in promoting the heritage and history of Missouri's African American community," Sen. Coleman said. "Educating people on the day the nation finally and officially bestowed the rights of freedom on all its citizens is a worthy and ongoing mission."

Governor Holden first expressed interest in establishing an emancipation commission when signing legislation (HB 640) last year establishing June 19 of each year as "Emancipation Day" (also known as Juneteenth), the day in 1865 when former slaves in Galveston, Texas, celebrated the ending of slavery in America.

"Juneteenth is a day when all Missourians are asked to devote a part of their day to remembering the Emancipation Proclamation and reaffirming a commitment to achieving equal justice and opportunity," Sen. Coleman said. "With the governor this year establishing an Emancipation Day Commission, the importance of Juneteenth will forever be fresh in the minds of current and future generations."

Governor Holden is expected to publicize the creation of the commission later this week during the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Foundation's annual conference in St. Louis.

"Fittingly, the conference occurs on Juneteenth," Sen. Coleman said. "This timing and the governor's action help elevate the lessons and legacy of Emancipation Day."

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